

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as indicated:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for installing framing material hangers in a workpiece, comprising:

a support frame that includes a base panel;

a selectively operable hanger actuator attached to the support frame, the hanger actuator including a piston that has a stroke direction;

a guide assembly operable to guide a framing material hanger;

a magazine operable to feed one or more framing material hangers into the guide assembly; ~~and~~

wherein operating the hanger actuator causes the piston to drive at least one of the hangers through the guide assembly; and

one or more workpiece supports that are attached to the base panel, and are operable to support a portion of the workpiece out of contact with the base panel.

Claims 2-13 (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for installing framing material hangers in a workpiece, comprising:

a support frame;

a selectively operable hanger actuator attached to the support frame, the hanger actuator including a piston that has a stroke direction;

a plunger attached to the piston;

a guide assembly operable to guide the plunger, including a shear block;

a clamp mechanism for clamping a stack of framing material hangers adjacent the shear block;

a magazine operable to feed the stack of framing material hangers ~~one or more framing material hangers~~ into the guide assembly; and

wherein operating the hanger actuator causes a framing material hanger to shear from the stack and be driven ~~the piston to drive at least one of the hangers~~ through the guide assembly.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the guide assembly includes an internal aperture having a cross-sectional geometry, and the plunger has a cross-sectional geometry that mates with the cross-sectional geometry of the internal aperture and permits the plunger to be slidably received within the internal aperture.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the plunger includes a ~~shear block having~~ a contact face shaped to accommodate a hanger.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the contact face includes one or more widthwise positioning tabs.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the plunger comprises a hanger retention mechanism.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the hanger retention mechanism comprises one or more magnets.

Claim 20 (Canceled).

21. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, 20, further comprising a wherein ~~the clamp mechanism is~~ selectively operable between a clamped position and an extended position, wherein in the clamped position the clamp mechanism is operable to prevent movement of at least one of the framing materials hangers toward the guide assembly.

22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 14-21, wherein the clamp mechanism is selectively operable between a clamped position and an extended position, and wherein

in the clamped position the at least one of the framing materials hangers is clamped against the stationary shear block.

23. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the magazine has a body sized to fit between a pair hanger legs.

24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the magazine is operable to receive a stack of hangers connected to one another.

25. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the stack of hangers is connected to one another by tabs, ~~wherein operation of the hanger actuator causes the tabs connecting a pair of hangers disposed within the guide assembly to be sheared.~~

26. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for installing framing material hangers in a workpiece, comprising:

- a support frame;

- a selectively operable hanger actuator attached to the support frame, the hanger actuator including a piston that has a stroke direction;

- a plunger attached to the piston;

- a guide assembly operable to guide the plunger;

- a magazine operable to feed one or more framing material hangers into the guide assembly;

- wherein operating the hanger actuator causes the piston to drive at least one of the hangers through the guide assembly; and

- a clamp mechanism selectively operable between a clamped position and an extended position, wherein in the clamped position the clamp mechanism is operable to clamp a stack of framing material hangers adjacent to prevent movement of at least one of the framing materials hangers toward the guide assembly.

27. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 26, wherein in the clamped position the at least one of the framing materials hangers is clamped against ~~the~~ a stationary shear block.

28. (Withdrawn) A stack of framing material hangers, comprising:

a plurality of framing material hangers, each having a web extending lengthwise between one or more legs disposed on each lengthwise end of the web;

wherein the web includes a raised midsection disposed between a pair of shoulder portions; and

one or more shearable tabs extending between, and attaching, adjacent ones of the plurality of hangers.

29. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 28, wherein the shoulder portions are substantially coplanar.

30. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 29, wherein one or both shoulder portions include an aperture.

31. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 30, wherein the raised midsection includes flanges disposed along each lengthwise extending edge, wherein each said flange substantially doubles a thickness of the midsection proximate the relative lengthwise extending edge.

32. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 28, wherein the hangers are oriented within the stack such that legs of the hangers within the stack, on each lengthwise end of the web, are substantially aligned with the other hanger legs disposed on that lengthwise end of the web.

33. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 28, wherein the tabs include one or more shear features.

34. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 33, wherein the one or more shear features include a slot disposed in the tab.

35. (Withdrawn) The stack of claim 33, wherein the one or more shear features include a narrowed portion disposed in the tab.

36. (Withdrawn) A framing material hanger, comprising:

a web that extends lengthwise and includes an arcuately shaped raised midsection disposed between a pair of shoulder portions, the midsection having a thickness, wherein the raised midsection includes flanges disposed along each lengthwise extending edge, and each flange increases the thickness of the midsection proximate the relative lengthwise extending edge; and

one or more legs disposed on each lengthwise end of the web.

37. (Withdrawn) The hanger of claim 36, wherein the shoulder portions are substantially coplanar.

38. (Withdrawn) The hanger of claim 36, wherein the flanges are rolled back against the midsection.

39. (Withdrawn) The hanger of claim 38, wherein one or both shoulder portions include an aperture.

40. (Withdrawn) The hanger of claim 38, wherein the raised midsection includes a narrowed central section.